

## **FILING A PRO SE COMPLAINT**

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The filing fee is **\$150.00**.

### **Documents Needed for Filing:**

1. **Civil Cover Sheet** (2 Stapled Pages)
2. **Complaint** (See Sample Format) -- you must file the original plus one copy for each defendant and one copy for yourself.

If you are suing an agency of the United States, you must also provide a copy for the U.S. Attorney General and the local U.S. Attorney.

You must write the complaint yourself. We cannot help you do this. The complaint must be typed or legibly handwritten on letter size paper. **It must be signed by you.**

3. **Summonses** (See Sample) -- you need the original and one copy for each defendant. If you are suing a U.S. government agency, you must also supply summonses for both the Attorney General and the local U.S. Attorney. (See addresses below)
4. **Case Information Statement** (See Sample)

### **Procedure for Filing:**

Bring all of the above documents, with the filing fee, to the U.S. District Court. The Intake Clerk will file your complaint and stamp the copies and the summonses.

You must then serve the defendant(s) with the complaint, summons, magistrate form (supplied by the Clerk), plus any orders from the judge which the Clerk may give you, within 120 days. You may serve them in one of three ways:

(1) You may mail (by certified mail) a copy of the summons (the unsigned one), with the other documents, to each person to be served. After service has been completed, fill out the back of the original summons, staple the green card to it, and return both to the court for filing.

(2) You may mail (by first class mail) a copy of the summons, with the other documents, to each person to be served. You should enclose two copies of the form entitled "Notice and Acknowledgment of Receipt of Summons and Complaint" (available from the Clerk) and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. After service has been completed, fill out the back of the original summons (the one which you kept), staple the "Acknowledgment" to it, and return both to the court for filing.

(3) You may have anyone over 18 years of age who is not a party to the lawsuit (that is, not you) personally serve a copy of the summons with the other documents on each named defendant. For instance, you may have a local sheriff serve your complaint and pay for the processing service. After service has been completed, return the appropriate proof of service form(s) with the original summons to the court for filing.

Any documents filed with the court after the filing of the complaint must also be served on the defendant(s). You can do this by mailing a copy of the document to be filed to each defendant and submitting to the court, with the original document, a certificate of service. This lets the court know that the defendant has been served. Be sure to keep copies of all your documents. The Clerk's Office is not obligated to provide copies of documents free of charge.

**Addresses of U.S. Attorneys for Cases where U.S. is served:**

U.S. Attorney General	U.S. Attorney, N.D. Ohio
Department of Justice	1800 Bank One Center
Washington, D.C. 20044	600 Superior Ave., East
	Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2600

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For procedural (not legal) assistance, contact:

Pro Se Law Clerk  
U.S. District Court  
801 West Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113